



Washington County Lead District-Richwoods

Richwoods, Mo.

Site Description

The Washington County Lead District–Richwoods site is part of a family of related Superfund sites located in Washington County, Mo. From the 1700s until the mid-20th century, numerous mines were built there to exploit the area’s rich reserves of metals such as lead and barite, which are poisonous to humans and animals. The act of transporting the metals to the surface and then processing them led to widespread contamination of soil and groundwater. The Richwoods site comprises about 45-square miles and is centered around a town bearing the same name. EPA added the site to the National Priorities List in 2008 and signed the Record of Decision for Operable Unit 1, Residential Properties in September 2011. Many residential yards and drinking water wells are contaminated, and large piles of metal-laced waste dirt exist throughout the site.

Current Site Status and Cleanup Actions to Date

- In 2008, EPA started a remedial investigation, which includes characterization of numerous tailings ponds and streams, determination of the extent of groundwater contamination and the completion of residential surface soil characterization.
- Assessment activities are ongoing and include sampling private properties for lead-contaminated surface soil and drinking water. EPA estimates that 297 remaining properties require assessment of soil and water.
- Through short- and long-term cleanup actions, EPA has replaced contaminated surface soil at 18 residences and 1 school, and provided bottled drinking water to 45 residences whose drinking water wells were contaminated above federal drinking water standards.
- Although funding and completion of this project will result in environmental progress, it will not eliminate all unacceptable human exposure pathways. Additional work will be needed to do so.

Unfunded Action

Fiscal Year 2012 work that was not funded included excavation and disposal of lead contaminated residential surface soil from an estimated 79 properties.

Current Funding Status

- To date, EPA has spent approximately \$3.0 million on response construction work at the site.

For more information on this site, please read [the Washington County Lead District-Richwoods site information](#) on the Region 7 Superfund web site.